A 000 765 650 7
UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

WHAT CAN I DO FOR BRADY?

AND OTHER VERSE

JOHNSON

VERSE

WHAT CAN I DO FOR BRADY?

AND OTHER VERSE

CHARLES F. JOHNSON

TRINITY COLLEGE

HARTFORD

NEW YORK

THOMAS WHITTAKER

2 and 3 Bible House

1897

Copyright 1897
by
Charles F. Johnson

Printed by
Clark & Smith
Hartford, Conn.

CONTENTS

PART I.

BLANK VERSE

What Can I Do for Brady? 5

Heredity, ... 22

St. Ignatius, ... 30

PART II.

MISCELLANEOUS

After the Crime, ... 35

The Fossil Fern, ... 36

London, ... 37

The Modern Drama, ... 39

To W. H., ... 40

The Hours, ... 41

The Fisherman's Daughter, ... 42

The Fire Flies and the Stars, ... 43

Then and Now, ... 45

Night (From the French). . . 47

The Elm Tree (From the French). . . . 48

The Sculptor. 49

"'Tis Folly To Be Wise." . . 52

Love's Light. 53

Love's Service. 54

The Shakesperean Phrase. 56

Requiescat. 58

The Warp and Woof. . . . 60

PART III.

SONNETS

The Outer Sea. 63

Act and Deed. 64

Iceland. 65

Modern Thought. 66

The Sky. 67

Science. 68

The New Faith. 69

Two Types. 70

Contents

Man Proposeth, ... 71

Moriturus, ... 72

Evolution, ... 73

History and Poetry, ... 74

Sir Walter, ... 75

Two Poets, ... 76

The Globe Theatre, ... 77

The Old and the New Self, ... 78

Love and Memory, ... 79

"Was I Content Before?" 80

PART IV.

HUMOROUS

Sonnets to Satan, No. 1, ... 83

" No. 2, ... 84

" No. 3, . . . 85

" No. 4, . . . 86

" No. 5, . . . 87

" No. 6, . . . 88

" No. 7, . . . 89

Sonnets to Satan, No. 8, ... 90

" No. 9, . . 91

Answer from Satan, ... 92

Legend of a Good Woman, ... 93

The Fate of the Spring Poet, ... 96

The Honest Man and the Phrenologist, . . . 97

The Marryin' of Danny Deever, ... 98

A Letter and Answer, ... 100

The Modern Romans, ... 102

The Greco-Trojan Game, ... 104

The Origin of Credit, ... 110

On a Christmas Box of "Henry Clays," . . 114

The Perfect Horse, ... 116

Sonnet in the "Obscure Style," 117

To the Earth in January, ... 118

The Emu's Party (For the Children), . . . 119

Time and I, ... 123

To Woolsey McAlpine Johnson
and Jarvis McAlpine Johnson:

Dear Boys,

I inscribe this book to you partly because I wish to and partly because one of you made several years ago such a surprisingly just criticism when he said that "Papa's poetry was dethidedly amateurish." I hope that in after years you may find that it is at least amateurish of the good.

Your affectionate father,

Charles F. Johnson

Trinity College
October, 1897

PART I.

BLANK VERSE

WHAT CAN I DO FOR BRADY?

TO Saratoga, when the streets are full
Of noisy, showy, idle people, who
Pursue amusement with a frantic zeal,
And fly from place to place at stated days,
Migrating always with the multitude,
Impelled by some strange instinct of their kind,
Like that which draws the swarms of flimsy gnats
To dance an hour in sunlit summer air
Beneath a certain tree and then disperse,
There come the members of the "Congresses"
To read their papers on "applied finance,"
Or "Social Science," or some "ology."
Strange mixture this, yet by some hidden law,
Wisdom is drawn to folly, those who know
And those who do not, meet each other there,
In that gay summer city of the north.

The "Social Science Congress" was addressed
By one who sank his shafts in mountains of
Statistics; cut the strata here and there,
And, by mechanical appliances,
Raised optimistic ore from out the mass,
And analysed it by his formulas,
Proving his points by accurate *per cents*,
That made one doubt. In summing up, he said,
That "progress dates from some catastrophe,"

That "at some point the balanced forces clash,
Surmount the law of quiet ordered working;
Then there is war; the fittest law survives,
The old one dies, dies hard perhaps, struggles
In death, and that we call a revolution.
For progress must be bought by blood of men,
Thus has it been since Calvary, and thus
It must be while the earth revolves, and men
Are men, till evolution ceases, chilled
In universal death—the age of ice.
We cannot hasten and we cannot stop
The progress of the world-democracy,
Nor make a battle harmless to the host
When principles contend."

Among his hearers sat a working man,
Worn-out and old, his fingers crooked and gnarled,
His shoulders bent. He listened patiently,
A hint of quiet scorn about his mouth,
Until that fell word, "war," rang out, and then
His dull eye glowed, a dark sinister flame
That hardly reached the surface, but it made
The man another creature, full of hate
And deadly energy, until he seemed
The only vital force within the room,
Full of professors and their platitudes.

The session over, I addressed the man;
He seemed to promise something real, and I

Was weary of the theorists, and their
Percentages and scientific pose.
Some talk on minor things we had, and then
Sat down beneath a broad veranda, where
We overlooked a brilliant pageant, men
And women fair to see, some faces base
And some refined; a sight to make one sigh
And smile, then sigh again more bitterly.

And then I said, "An able paper that,
And clear, but yet I doubt not we shall move
On to some future social state without
A war. The day for wars has past, and we
Move slowly, but through peace, to better things."
The old man answered warmly, "Three long days
I've listened in that hall to wise men talk,
And but one point was made, worth serious thought,
And that was when he said, 'blood must be shed.'
Religious freedom came through war; through war
Men broke the yoke of tyranny in France,
And now the industrial yoke bears hard on men.
Conditions are the same—nay worse, far worse."
"But surely, sir," I said, "you do not think?—
But pardon me, I do not know your name."
"John Brady, sir." "But surely, Mr. Brady, you
Don't mean to say that in our country here
The working men are ready for revolt?"

What can I do for Brady?

Mr. Brady

"I do, and what is more, I know; for I
Am one. For thirty years I've spent my days
In making lead—white lead—and now I say,
Our worn-out social system never can
Grow better, since 'tis worse with every year.
'Twas based on justice once, but now is old.
A class has formed—the moneyed class; its ranks
Grow close, its institutions spread—as banks
And companies and trusts. The ablest men
The nation can produce give it their lives
And services in law and politics;
It holds the highways with a single aim
To levy toll. It has no sympathy;
It is a foreign power that knows no bond
To those not of it. Thus the working men
Are forced to organize; the employing class
Then say, 'We are the nation, let the herd
Obey the law, they're not of us nor we
Of them.' The working men are slow to act,
But quick to feel a deep and dull unrest.
They strike and fail, to strike and fail again;
They learn in suffering; close up their ranks;
The breach grows wider and distrust more tense;
Some little thing brings on the crisis; blood
Is shed; the frenzy spreads; you have a war."

What can I do for Brady?

The Interlocutor

"To me it seems that working men earn more
And have a wider outlook on the world
And fuller lives with every gain men wrest
From nature's secrets, for the novel force
Accrues, not to one man but to the race.
I grant the rich are richer than they were;
But, still, more strength lies in the working hand,
A man's worth more; thus all participate.
Our modern system lifts the mass of men;
If luxury increases, comfort, too,
Is everywhere diffused, and suffering
Is less by far than in our fathers' days.
A civil war grows out of positive
Distress and hunger, not from discontent."

Mr. Brady

"Then, sir, you're wrong. When hostile systems clash,
As slavery and freedom, right and wrong,
In any form, why then a war must come;
If not this year, why then the next, or next,
This only sure, each day brings on the day.
I doubt statistics, figures cannot lie—
The statistician can—but still I'll grant
The laborer commands more than he did,
Say, fifty years ago. He was content,
Now he is not. We have a theory
In these United States that men are born

Equal before the law; this we are taught,
All hold it as a truth bred in the bone,
'Tis part of character, but when we find
There is a chasm 'twixt the rich and poor
As deep as that between the man and beast,
And feel our sacred birthright is denied,
It makes a wound. This theory on which
Our system rests, makes the American
More sensitive. It is not lack of food
That drives men to revolt, but discord deep,
In social theory and facts of life.
Freemen rebel because they are free men,
But slaves are happy in their slavery."

The Interlocutor

"But you can strike, refuse to work, and that
Adjusts, though in a crude and clumsy way,
Your grievances. Grant that you lose more than
You gain by strikes; at least, your protest's made,
And so in time you mould the world's slow thought:
Opinion founds itself on concrete fact;
And wrong cannot endure publicity."

Mr. Brady

"Again I'm forced to disagree. I've been on strike
Five times as man, and twice as manager.
First let me say, we do not lose more than
We gain by strikes; whichever way it ends,

We've had excitement, we have lived, been men.
How much that means, you cannot know nor feel.
Perhaps we've lived on scanty food—no meat,
No sugar—but, the six weeks passed, remained
Alive. Had we been working, we could say
No more than that—worn out perhaps, but still
Alive, and six weeks older—that is all;
But with a memory and consciousness
Of having tried to help our class. A thought
Like that pays one for starving. Hard it was
To hear the children cry, but even they
Soon understood and whimpered quietly,
And tried to set their faces like the men.
Now looking back, I see, had we not struck
The working men would be worse off to-day,
Their hearts more hopeless and their brains more dull.
Besides, we've learned to know each other well,
For nothing tries men's mettle like a strike;
It purges all the traitors from the band
And binds true comrades with a tie of steel."

The Interlocutor

"But surely, Mr, Brady, you must own
That rioting and violence cannot
Promote your cause. We rest on law, not force."

Mr. Brady

"The law! Who makes the law? Your statutes rest
On people's wills; but let that pass. A strike
Is war; it should be under discipline:

But riot hangs about the skirts of war.
We must have discipline, and leaders too,
And both will come. Oh, how we long to see
A leader, one of God's own men, a man
With simple aim, who will take up and weld
The loose-compacted mass of working men
Into a unit! I shall not see the day—
But it will come—when every working man
Stands by his mates, when treason shall be death,
And a new system rises on the world.
But such a chance, I know does not arrive
Without a war and many martyrs' deaths—
I would to God I might be one."

The Interlocutor

"I think you should rejoice that your long life
Would end before that old barbaric way
Of progress was retrod. The world is bad enough
I fear; I hope not bad enough for that."

Mr. Brady

"Long life! How old a man you reckon me?"

The Interlocutor

"'Tis hard to tell. Say sixty-eight—or more."

Mr. Brady

"I'm forty-five. I have not long to live,
I am worn out; I do not fear to die.
One thing I'm sorry for. In me the cause

Will lose its strongest argument, for all
The working men in seven states know me;
And when I pass one in the streets, I see
His brows contract, his hands clench hard, as if
He gripped a weapon's hilt, and to his mate
I hear him say, 'There's Brady, worn to death
By honest work and cast aside to die
Like some old mule!' And then I hear an oath
Low-muttered, and it warms my heart to feel
The cause is stronger. Round my coffin soon
My mates will tell how faithfully I worked,
And say that to my class I never once
Proved false in word or thought."

The Interlocutor

"Your pardon, Sir;
The storm of life has beaten hard on you,
You have my sympathy; but do not think
That I live in the sun. I earn my bread
By work, like you."

Mr. Brady

"That, Sir, I knew at once,
Or else you would have had no word from me."

The Interlocutor

"But still, in much I cannot follow you.
You say, cut loose, discard the past, and start

Afresh. But progress is continuous,
The new grows from the old, rests on the past.
Through all cross-currents, baffling winds, this world
Moves slowly on, not by the definite wills
Or purposes of men, nor in a scheme
Which we can formulate. You speak of war;
As if the modern order was all wrong
And must be torn asunder, cast aside
And thrown upon the feudal rubbish-heap,
With rusty armor, tarnished crowns and all
The muniments of ancient privilege.
It is not thus God works within the world
To move it on to better things. He moves
Not in the storm, but still and unperceived,
In slowest growth of atoms, one by one
Laid down. The ocean's vast and oozy bed
Was raised and made a continent by slow
Degrees, and so the mass of selfish men
Is raised through centuries. Here, too, we see
He works upon the units, not the mass,
Each must aspire and strive alone, and they,
The rich or poor or drones or criminals,
Who live the selfish life, are mere dead weight,
That cannot be cast off by violence.
Your strikes and wars are mere phenomena;
True progress lies below in single hearts.
The social structure has a vital soul
Which lives in memories and precedents,
And grows with every generation's growth.

Deform the structure and the soul is dwarfed ;
As yet, I grant, 'tis inarticulate,
Much like a child's soul in a mortal frame—
For first the structure grows and then the soul—
The soul of man is in its infancy,
But full of promise, if of portent, too.
You cannot have a newer, better world
Except through newer, better men. Men make
Society by slow degrees, by points
Won here and there in human souls—a slow
And toilsome task—such is the organic law—
At least, 'tis thus I read it as I can."

Mr. Brady

" I find no hope in your philosophy,
Nor can man be content by thinking on
The future of the race. His present lot
Is all he feels. We know that ours bears hard,
And you must own that your millenium
Is too far off to be a goal for us.
Men aim at what they see, and feel and know."

The Interlocutor

" Then do not look so far. Two things there are
Of highest worth, on which our system rests:
The Christian Church, the Colleges and Schools.
The one is based on helpfulness and love,
Broad comradeship of men, the other holds
An open door for all. Our colleges

Are for the sons of working men; if one's
Athirst to learn, there can he freely choose.
Again, if any group of men are wronged
They have a two-edged weapon for defense;
For centuries have men been striving for
The equal ballot—shield and sword alike
For human right. You have it; use it now"

Mr. Brady

"The Church is not of us nor we of it.
It rests on ancient usage; we on right.
It has developed far beyond the thought
Of him, the friend of men whom we revere,
The Carpenter, the first true socialist.
Its litanies call for deliverance
From wrongs of days long past; its charity
Is fixed by membership, it is no home
For us. As for your boasted Colleges:
A boy stays there four years; when he comes out
He leaves his class, and ten to one, he proves
Its bitterest enemy, and takes what skill
His training gives to work for capital.
The Turks, I've heard, took Christian boys from home
And kin, and trained them up to fight for them;
They called them 'Mamelukes,' I think. These boys,
The working boys who go to Colleges,
They are the modern hireling Mamelukes,
Freed from all homely ties and sympathies,
Most bitter foes to all the working class;

For in their souls burns deep the traitor's hate.
In talks about the working-bench, we learn
And teach more than is taught in lecture rooms;
The Union is our school and graduate course;
Far sooner would I see a son of mine
Lie dead, his worn tools in his calloused hands,
Than in the office, casting up accounts.
You spoke of Politics as if through that
All changes could be made by party vote;
But that requires a skill we do not own;
We've talked of it. The lawyers always win.
To run a party is no work for us;
A hundred forms of prejudice arise,
And interest takes a thousand more. How then,
Can we manipulate such elements?
My notion is, keep clear of politics,
Or we will surely wreck our cause."

The Interlocutor

"There you confuse the strife for salaries,
With politics. All worthy human work
Is marred by selfish men who thrust themselves
For hire, upon the people—beasts of prey—
Incarnate appetites—each party flag
Attracts its flock of vultures, whose obscene
And raucous voices all assert 'the spoils
Belong to victors,' and their noisome breath
Infects the air, but shall we then declare
The business of the nation base as they!
Now, tell me something definite, just what
You fear, and what you hope to bring about."

What can I do for Brady?

Mr. Brady

" The future must declare ; we feel our way,
No man can tell what laws we need, events
Take on strange shapes no man foresees. Could you
Go with me to our council-board to-night—
For we, too, have our yearly Congress here—
You'd meet some men of theories and schemes,
That may not be. I might say that I think
Our system gives one man a greater strength
Than one can safely hold. All history
Declares that privilege destroys itself ;
What matter it if power rests on law !
It did in France one hundred years ago,
No less firm-buttressed than our bosses are.
Give one man power over fellow-men,
Not earned by brain or arm in their defense,
You build a rotten dam, and every deed
Of selfishness adds to that silent pond
Where wrongs accumulate, until the dam
Gives way, and then the mighty flood of hate
Whelms all in ruin dire ; the innocent
And the oppressor, both are swept away
In lawless rush of elemental force.
Since we sat here, two men passed by ; one old,
One young. The old one is a gentleman
Beloved by all. Two thousand working men
Are in one shop of his ; one word from him
Would bring distress and blight—nay, more—despair
And ruin, on eight hundred homes. He is
A man. He knows his hands, how weak they are,

He can be trusted with the power of life
And death. The other was his son, a cur
In heart and soul; I tremble when I think
That soon he'll hold that power; and I can name
A hundred cases where one man has more
Of real authority than any lord
Who ships his tenants over sea and makes
A sheep-walk of their homes. In twenty years
It will be worse. The world has never seen
Such concentrated strength in single men
Without some foul abuse and fell revenge.
You say they are restrained by law. Not so;
The law compels the poor, protects the rich.
No poor man is so mad as to invoke the law;
For if he did, it would not answer him.
You have the reasons why I see no hope
Except in force."

He rose and took his leave,
But with a certain rugged dignity;
And as I watched his lean and wasted form
With rounded shoulders and with crooked hands,
Melt in the crowd of saunterers, it seemed
As if an elemental force had gone,
Unknown, unheeded, with the careless throng.
For with him seemed to march the *Tiers Etat*,
"The fierce democratie,"—the desperate souls
Who hurled themselves against the barriers
In frantic wrath—the proletariat—
The potent spirits of the sons of toil—

What can I do for Brady?

Prints of whose bloody hands are left upon
The side-posts of the gate where liberty
First won her entrance to the world in France:
The brilliant pageant seemed to be a dream;
The great hotel, some cloud-built edifice,
And old John Brady, literal and strong.
And often have I thought, "what can I do
For him?" He stands for fifty thousand men;
Can I clear up his moody discontent,
Or do the least to reconcile the lot
Of men with what we blindly feel should be,
And bring our country nearer its ideal,
Until the birthright of each citizen
Shall blossom in a goodly heritage,
And in her robes of state, America,
Among the other nations of the world,
Stands like Diana 'mid her sister nymphs,
More queenly fair and tall than all the rest?
God knows if any one would show the way,
That I, and thousands more, would help the work.
We all love justice with a desperate love;
We love our country more than other men
Love theirs—far more. What can we do for it?
For when we meet with Brady, all our talk
Seems futile; we can never touch the man
With theories, for he has wrought his crude
And partial thought into so tight a knot,
And then, he may be right, not in all points,
But in the main. He lives with facts, his life,
Close to the ground, gives him a grip on facts,

What can I do for Brady?

An instinct for the concrete truth. He's like
A native who might talk with one who reads
In books the folk-lore of a foreign land
And builds an academic theory,
An empty phase of thought, an unknown tongue
To one who heard the tales from mother's lips.
None understand the force of Adam's curse
But those beneath the ban. Cruel, that they
Who have sneaked back to Paradise should sneer
With pitiless disdain at those left out.
One thing at least! I'll treat him like a man,
And not disdain his human brotherhood.
He does as much for me. He plays his part
And pays his way, and asks no odds of fate.

Next week I read his name below a list
Of "new arrivals" at the great hotel:
"Died: Brady, John, last night. The funeral
Will be conducted by the 'Section M.'"

HEREDITY

JUST as the clock struck four from the Congregational steeple—
Struck in a lumpy way, as if deciding the question—
Harding looked out from the door of the bank on the street for a moment,
Looked on the quiet street where not a loose leaf was stirring
Up in the crowns of the elms the settlers had carefully planted.
Everything seemed asleep except some boys on the sidewalk,
Playing briskly at marbles with treble vociferations.
And a bird overhead, an oriole cheerfully whistling,
Peering about for a suitable crotch for his "procreant cradle."

Harding re-entered the bank and locked the door behind him:
He was cashier, bookkeeper, and teller and trusted factotum
In the old bank of a quiet town of rural New England;
Hard and cool and silent, reticent, unsympathetic,
Accurate, swift and acute, a type of the capable Yankee
Straight from Puritan fathers and primitive Puritan virtues.
First he counted his cash with rapid and graceful precision,
Keeping one bill in the air as the last one fell on the counter;
Then he footed his file of checks and slips of deposit,
Nodding his head when the total came out right to a penny.
Frowning and closing his lips, he lifted a currency bundle,
Ran some bills over quickly, and pausing the tenth of a second,
Started slightly at hearing a voice ring out in the silence;

Raucous and throaty and deep, with a novel accentuation.
Right by the grating there stood a man of martial appearance,
Eyeing the money with interest as he said with decision:
"Pouch 'em' my lad, pouch the dirty pieces of paper,
They are thine by right, for the paltry pittance they pay thee
Isn't one-half thy worth to the purblind board of directors.
More than three years you have managed this bank for beggarly wages.
Help yourself like a man, or be forever downtrodden."

"All that you urge no doubt is quite true," Harding responded,
"But if you speak so loudly some passer may happen to hear you."

"No one can hear me but thee, my lad, and that psalm-singing Roundhead—
Would I had slit his weasand or ever he married my daughter,
Making me grandsire of Puritans, me, who fought with Prince Rupert;
But the old blood will tell in the end though basely commingled.
Thou hast some in thy veins, and it makes thee chafe at thy bondage;
All us De Courceys were soldiers of fortune back to the Conquest,
No cadet of our house ever served a master not noble.
Pause not, my lad, pause not, for they treat thee with sordid injustice,
Take what you like, put it back when you like, and no one the wiser."

Harding's fingers closed on the bills with determination,
Then he relaxed his grasp, for another stood by the first one;
Thin and uncomely his face, and his figure stiff and unyielding,
Only his eye was deep with the light of a noble ideal.
Thus he spoke, and his high-pitched voice had a resonant sweetness;
Echoes of strenuous thought and narrow devotion to duty
Seemed to tell of the cross-grained virtues of ancient New England.

"Think, my son: for the act in your mind is prompted by Satan;
It is *theft*—no more nor less—far worse than theft on the highway.
Robbers show courage at least, though they wear a mask on their faces;
He who takes from a trust and adds to robbery, treason,
He puts a mask on his soul and robs in a cowardly fashion.
I was the pastor who led the flock through the wilderness hither:
Great were our dangers, my son, when first we came to this refuge,
Dangers from savage beasts, and dangers from men of the forest.
Thine, in the headlong scramble for money, are greater than ours were.
Cunningly laid are the traps of the devil and cunningly baited,
Far more subtle is he than the Indian savage in ambush;
Strong is the tempter, my son, and strong the daily temptation.

Therefore I yearn over thee, my son, more in pity than sorrow.
Think of the name thou bearest, unsullied for five generations:
John Harding—the name handed down as a trust from your father,
Borne by your father and grandsire and me, without taint of dishonor!
Heed not the words of this man of sin, this dissolute courtier.
Nevertheless his rights in thy soul are as strong as mine own are,
Since his daughter came across the perilous ocean,
Came with me, her husband, in loving and faithful devotion.
Thus I plucked a brand from the burning to feed the flame on the altar,
Thus came the taint in the blood to plague the fifth generation."

Fiercely, the other broke in on his words with a loud imprecation:
"Taint, thou Puritan dog! Taint! It is thou that hast tainted,
Tainted the blood of my race with the muddy stream of the Hardings.
Leave us, hypocrite Roundhead, leave me to talk with the youngster,
Or I will deal roundly with thee though much it mislikes me
Even to touch thy miserable carcass. Would that I had thee
Back in old England, back in the days of Merry King Charley.
Soon the hangman would shorten thine ears 'till the noose would slip over,
Cool his brand-iron on thy back and scourge thee out of the city.

Psalm-singing knave and low-born cur of the pestilent Round-
heads,
Hold thy peace when a gentleman talks to another in private."

"Nay, my son," said the preacher, "heed not the ragings of
Satan,
Heed not this vaporing man of wrath whom the godly Oliver
Cromwell,
Loth to shed recreant blood, mistakenly spared from the gallows.
Cromwell, loth to shed blood except in open encounter.
No one could hurt this man, he fled so nimbly in battle."

"Liar and hound," yelled the other, hurling himself on the
preacher,
Meaning to catch his enemy's neck in the vice-like grip of the
elbow,
But the old Puritan flung out his arms and ducked neatly under,
Spreading his legs and arching his back and bracing his shoul-
ders,
So that he grasped the Cavalier's waist at a slight disadvantage.
Straining and swaying to and fro with a tremulous motion,
Neither seemed, for an instant, able to bear down the other.

Stirred to the roots of his being, Harding regarded the struggle,
Breathing deep and hard in sympathetic excitement;
Out of his heart came the wish, "I hope the preacher will
throw him."
Then, the dominie, seeming to gain in strength and in stature,
Twisted the other off from his feet with a mighty endeavor,
Raised him clear of the floor and flung him over his shoulder,

Whirled him round twice and threw him over the top of the fan-light.
Flatwise he struck on the wall with the angry howl of a demon,
Slap through the wall he went, leaving only a luminous flicker
Marking with lambent flame on the place the shape of his figure ;
Bluish smoke curled up on the wall and was gone in an instant,
While the Cavalier's oaths and his seventeenth-century curses
Tore through the air outside and died away in the distance.

Hastily, Harding put all his cash in the proper compartments,
Pushed the box in the safe, closed the door and setting the time lock,
Threw up the curtain and looked on the silent and luminous May day.
Still on the sidewalk the boys were noisily playing at marbles,
Through the main street a leisurely farmer was driving his oxen,
Over their heads in the elms the cheerful oriole whistled ;
None of them seemed aware that a mortal conflict was over,
Fought by ghosts in that little room, with Harding for umpire.
When he turned back, there stood the grim, old Puritan preacher,
Upright and quaint and sincere, his face lit up by his triumph.
" 'Twas a shrewd tussle," he said, " and much I feared for the issue.
We are beside thee, my son, in thy daily comings and goings,
Never before have we met in such a dreadful encounter.
Only thy will, my son, gave me the strength to o'erthrow him ;
Though we prompt thy thought, yet thy will ruleth our promptings."

While he spoke, his resonant voice grew fainter and fainter,
Till the last words were carried into the listener's conscience
Free from audible sound in the air, while his face and his figure
Faded away, as if veil after veil had risen between them;
Then he was gone! and naught but the whirling motes in the sunbeams
Met the gaze of the man as he drew in his breath with a shudder.

Harding opened the door, his face still set with emotion.
On the sidewalk the boys were disputing and playing at marbles,
Far down the street could be heard the creak of the lumbering ox-cart,
In the elms overhead the oriole cheerfully whistled,
Out of a pear-tree from over the way with rapturous shrillness
Came the song-sparrow's lyric, the sweetest sound of New England.

"Say, Mr. Harding," said one of the boys, looking up from his marbles,
"Isn't our bank the biggest and safest bank in the country?"
"There are larger ones, Johnny," said Harding, "but none, I think, safer."
Sudden, he stopped and looked back, for in his own intonations
Plainly he heard the tones of the "port-wine voice" of De Courcey,
Arrogant, brutal and deep, yet soft as the purr of a tiger.
Then he drew himself up as he saw his figure reflected
Dim in the glass of the window, close by the side of the column,

Heredity

For the poise of the head, the bearing and turn of the shoulders,
Looked like the Puritan's shadow, with strong and vital suggestions
Of faith and strenuous trust in himself, his God and his conscience.
Dim from the depth of the glass the silent image looked on him,
Honest and calm and true, the type of ancestral New England.

ST. IGNATIUS

THE semi-translucent color, crude and unsympathetic,
Filtered out of the noonday sun that beat on the windows
All of the searching, revealing rays of the critical daylight,
Toning with soft, effeminate warmth the chancel and organ,
Making the white-robed, snub-nosed choristers' faces appear less
Plainly Milesian, and less like wild things pent in their places.
The drone of the priest, his pose, and labored intonations
Harmonized well with the scene and gave it an air of effeteness,
As of something old, from which the life had departed,
Something which ran of itself from long-fixed habit and usage.
Just as a very old man repeats the tales of his boyhood,
Calling up names of men and things long dead and forgotten,
Real and living for him in moonlit memory's vision,
Vacant of meaning to us in the clear, cold air of the present,
So that lady-like priest declaimed a decorous sermon,
Void of all relation to questions of every-day living,
Chasing his thought in a circle, confounding the end and beginning,
Reading bewildering meanings into historical records,
Setting aside what men have learned by patient endeavor,
Hewing and carving the fact to square with certain assumptions,
Harping on crude and infantile guesses at central existence.

From a cushioned pew I noted with some irritation
This man cantering smoothly in regions of absolute fancy,
And yet appealing to me as if it were argumentation.

" How does it happen," I mused, " that his thought always misses connection?
No one could call him precisely insane in the judgment of lawyers,
Though in his brain the currents are crossed in hopeless confusion.
If all reasoned like him, we should have the kingdom of chaos:
Civilization would ebb, the great moral lights be extinguished;
Over the world would creep an unintelligent darkness,
Under which men would be portioned anew twixt the priest and the soldier.
What thinks the great world-spirit of this strange, composite worship,
This modern compound of Roman, and Greek, and Hebrew tradition,
Mixed with a trace of the Persian cult of saluting the morning,
Lacking the central strength of a unified racial conception?
What thinks that great conscience which sees the past and the present,
Sees the rites in Solomon's temple and with the same vision
Sees the stately march of the ancient Egyptian procession,
And in the cavern beneath the city the primitive Christians
Singing the hymn and breaking the bread in communal worship,
What thinks that great spirit of this man and this congregation? "

Full of these thoughts that passed and repassed in endless succession
Raising my eyes I saw on the left a crude mural painting,

St. Ignatius

Showing the Christ in healing the sick and blessing the people.
Suddenly over me came a sense of that infinite patience
Based on love divine and human brotherly kindness;
How he spoke to the good in man from his infinite goodness,
How he spoke to the poor and weak with boundless compassion.
Suddenly, too, I felt that pride is blind and inhuman:
Pride of riches we call unintelligent child's pride;
Intellectual pride is yet more cold and unchristian.

Slight is our knowledge at best, mere wading in shallows
Close to the shore and guessing about the depths of the ocean
Stretching miles and miles and covering vast abysses.
What can we reptiles know of the scheme of the world-evolution,
Seeing a moment with purblind eyes a fragment of action,
Glancing with scorn at the front of the stage behind which are moving
In shadow the forces which carry the sub-plot of human endeavor
While the main plot is slowly developed in numberless æons?
Great is the plan, without measure the years of its endless enfolding.
Knowledge, we painfully gather, beauty we seek to embody
Though but a hint is vouchsafed us, blent with mundane confusion;
Both we know are divine, but both on earth are imperfect;
Love alone is revealed, unbounded in god-like perfection.
Surely the man who sneers from a sense of superior knowledge,
Writes himself down as lower than him whom he sneers at.

PART II.

MISCELLANEOUS VERSE

AFTER THE CRIME

UNREASONING anger in my soul held sway
Throughout the night, but with the break of day
Into my home there came an accusing ghost.
I challenged faint as one whose hope is lost,
My shuddering heart-blood chilling at its source,
"What art thou called?" It said, "*I am Remorse.*"

Next day a second came with pensive air,
The serious look which happy children wear
When the first sense of life's sad sympathies
Looks through the tears in thoughtful eyes.
Wondering, I asked while the pathetic gaze I met,
"And who art thou?" It said, "*I am Regret.*"

But as it spoke the outline grew less plain,
Then vanished, and my heart was light again,
Another ghost had bid the last depart,
I challenged boldly, "Tell me who thou art,
That makest Regret to yield her mild duress."
This answered, "*I am called Forgetfulness.*"

THE FOSSIL FERN

DEEP in the coal mine's damp and dark recess
Beneath a thousand feet of rocky roof,
I found a fossil fern, its loveliness
As delicate as when its fairy woof
Of rib and vein grew in the wind-swept air
Beneath a sun more bright and glorious
Than ours, upon a youthful world more fair
Than this old wrinkled world which shelters us.
The fern is dead, how many years ago!
Its soul survives the voyage perilous
Through centuries and countless centuries,
For it was beautiful. The cruel, slow,
Relentless years could not consume
The eternal form which still delights our eyes
And only grew more perfect in the tomb.

LONDON

WHY is it that men always rate
The smoky London truly great,
Greater than Paris or than Rome,
Though art in these has made her home,
And England's Capital has been
Dear to the modern Philistine?
Not for her streets where millions crawl
And toil and die; no, not for all
Her miles of ships and busy marts
And "triumphs of industrial arts,"
And old historic palaces
Haunted by feudal memories;
Not for all these, but here were born
Six poets: first, he who in the morn
Of letters wrote the pilgrimage
To Canterbury, which still the age
Delights to read, and will as long
As men love men; then, he whose song
Unto his bride is still as sweet
As when he laid it at her feet;
Next, the old man, whose sightless eyes
Saw the fair Eve in Paradise
While musing o'er the eternal plan
To justify God's ways to man;
Then, Keats, upon whose laurelled hearse

London

Young Shelley laid his deathless verse,
The noblest tribute ever paid
By mortal man to an immortal shade;
And Browning, in whose cryptic line
The thought lies hid, as in a mine
The precious ore, that they must blast
And toil and sweat to come at last
Upon a vein of paying quartz
'Neath fifty feet of barren orts;
And he, the painter to whose name
Two arts have yielded equal fame,
In color and in words intense
Beyond the scope of mortal sense,
Rossetti, artist through and through,
Who linked the old world and the new.
These sons are London's pride, and thus
Her name is made so glorious
That neither Rome nor Paris dare
Their diadems with hers compare.

THE MODERN DRAMA

YOU say, the modern playwright merely seeks
To raise a laugh on foolishest pretense,
That actors have no higher aim, and that the Greeks
Would look with scorn on play and audience.

You say, the art of acting, too, is gone,
For minor parts essential to the whole,
Since the one " star " desires to shine alone,
Are murdered nightly by some thick-tongued fool.

It may be so, but yet it is our stage,
Though naught but pictures speaking to the eye ;
We make our drama, as we make our age,
A pageant destitute of poetry.

TO W. H.

WHAT was the name behind those capitals?
Speak, shade of "W. H." Did Thomas Thorpe,
That sly and subtle printer, make thee up
To puzzle future ages? Answer me.
If you "begot" the sonnets Shakespeare wrote,
Did you "inspire" or merely "gather" them?
And while you are about it, tell me please,
Who was the "other poet," and who, O who,
The lady was? I "pause for a reply."

And while I pause, I hear a mocking laugh,
A dry and crackling chuckle, "he – he – he"—
It is the tinkling sneer of Thomas Thorpe
From out the malebolge where jesters dwell
Who set conundrums which the world can't guess,
Then die and leave no key. Laugh on, "T. T."
Some day I'll visit thee, and grip thy throat,
And squeeze thy withered weasand; then ease up
Until you gasp the truth about those manuscripts.

THE HOURS

BEHIND each hour there always lies another
More like the first than brother unto brother,
And thought can never find the first one nor the last
In endless future nor in endless past.

No ending to the line and no beginning!
Simply the clock of time forever ringing,
A solemn fog-bell tolling everlastingly
Above the wan waves of a level sea!

What does it mean, this ceaseless, sad procession
Of hours? No halt, no change, no retrogression,
No haste, no swerving, no delaying, no retreat,
Each like the last as pendulum beat to beat!

The earth and moon grow ever old and older,
And human hearts grow warmer or grow colder,
While stealthy death creeps up all ties to sever,
The hours move in unbroken file forever.

For they alone are free from all mutation,
Exempt alike from death and from creation;
They pass, and pass, and pass, and passing testify
To infinite and immanent eternity.

THE FISHERMAN'S DAUGHTER

AN OLD BALLAD RE-SET

A MAIDEN lived by the river-side
Where the river meets the ocean's tide,
"*Oh, ferry me over the ferry.*"

She took my youthful heart in fee,
For she was fair as fair could be,
As she rowed me across in her wherry.

Her hair was as bright as the waves of a rill
When the sun on the eve of his setting stands still,
Her lips were as red as a cherry.

A sea-king's daughter she might have been,
Or a maid of honor to ocean's queen,
To me she was tender and merry,

But the world's strong current casts aside
Young love, like drift torn up by the tide,
And time all passions can bury.

* * * * * *

Though years have come and have gone again,
In my heart still echoes the old refrain:
"*Oh, ferry me over the ferry.*"

THE FIRE-FLIES AND THE STARS

The young Fire-Fly speaks:

"THE clover blooms so sweet with dew,
Lie far beneath the field of blue,
But there, as here, the realm of night
Is pierced by points of glittering light.
Our little flame's a fitful spark
Closed in by curtains of the dark;
Their steady ray must surely be
Exempt from mutability.
How beautiful and calm they are,
Oh, would that I could fly so far!
Night after night I gaze at them,
And long to touch their garment's hem.
No doubt they're of a nobler race;
If I could see them face to face,
Perhaps they'd even speak to me,
They are so glorious to see—
And teach me lore of higher worth
Than that which guides us here on earth.
Their nature must be like to mine,
Though I'm an insect; they, divine."
Thus spake the ardent young fire-fly,
Gazing with reverence at the sky.

The Fire-Flies and the Stars

The paternal scientific Fire-Fly answers:

"I've heard that rot about the skies
From many ardent young fire-flies.
Those stars you see are not divine,
In some mechanical way they shine;
Night after night, they're just the same,
And not like me, a living flame.
Perhaps they're bits of phosphorous
Stuck up to light the night for us,
Perhaps they're strictly subjective,
Existing only while we live.
No one can find out what they are;
They're unexplained phenomena.
Stick to the near; avoid the far;
Don't speculate about the sky
Or anything that is so high;
You waste your time in dreaming of
Things you can't taste, or weigh, or prove;
Study yourself and fellow flies,
Things you can see and analyze,
Don't stare aloft with weeping eyes.
And then, perhaps, you may pile on
The cairn of facts one little stone."

Thus spake the elder wise fire-fly—
The younger still looks on the sky.

THEN AND NOW

To me the earth once seemed to be
Most beautiful and fair;
All living creatures were to me,
In wood or air,
But kindred of a freer class;
I thrilled with keenest joy
To find the young quail in the grass;—
I was a boy.

The robin in the apple-tree,
The brown thrush in the wood,
The meadow larks, all called to me;
I understood:
A sense of union with the whole,
Of love for beast and bird,
Deep chords from man's ancestral soul,
Each wild note stirred.

All that is gone, and now I see
A blood-stained earth, where strife,
Unceasing war, and cruelty,
Make room for life;
Each living thing a helpless prey
To sharper tooth or claw,
Ten thousand murders every day
By nature's law.

But still old earth its glamour casts
O'er the clear eyes of youth,
And still the old illusion lasts
In spite of truth;
For now I find my boy can see
The earth I used to know,
He sees it as it seemed to me
So long ago.

Poor little chap! Sometimes I think
I'll tell him how he's fooled,
But when I see his eyes, I shrink,
My purpose cooled:
Why should I cloud his soul with doubt,
Or youth's illusions mar?
Too soon, alas, he will find out
That life is war.

NIGHT

FROM THE FRENCH OF THEOPHILE GAUTIER

THE day was dying, and a cloud
Emptied of light lay listless in the west,
And on the wan face of the sea allowed
The drooping folds of its white cloak to rest.

The Night appeared, the sable Night serene,
Clad in sad mourning for her brother Day;
And every star to their enthroned queen,
In golden raiment came, its court to pay.

The place was full of echoes of forgotten things,
Sounds without sources rising everywhere,
Like beatings of mysterious wings
From angels drifting through the darkling air.

For heaven was whispering softly with old earth,
As once they talked on Sinai or Horeb—
Was telling o'er the mystery of their birth—
I caught the one word—God—'twas all they said.

THE ELM TREE

FROM THE FRENCH OF THEOPHILE GAUTIER

ON the hill-side down there where the graves lie,
A tall elm tree, a green and feathery plume,
Lifts up its head, to which at eve the birds fly—
Their shelter through the gloom.

But in the morning they all leave the elm tree
And seek some distant fields, I know not where—
East and West and North and South, dispersedly,
They scatter through the air.

My soul is like that tree, for dream-like faces
And throngs of fancies with the darkness come,
But with the morning fly to unknown places
Where fancies have their home.

THE SCULPTOR

LONG years the sculptor dreamed and wrought
To realize in stone the thought
Of Christ the Saviour, blessed Lord,
The hope of man, the incarnate word.
His hand was skilled ; men said that he
Was master of art's mystery,
And he was studious, reverent, wise.
Long years he failed to realize
In stone the ideal he labored o'er ;
With each attempt dissatisfied,
He every morning cast aside
What he had done the day before.

At last, he seemed, one happy day,
To reach his aim ; the plastic clay
Took from his hand the sure impress
Which, wrought in marble, should express
The Prophet-priest of David's line
Who linked the human and divine.
Then, when his labor was complete,
He called a child from out the street,
" Dear child," he said, " now tell me true,
Who does this statue seem to you ? "
The child looked on the solemn head,
Serene and loving ; then she said,

" 'Tis some good angel from above
That brings to man God's words of love."

The sculptor mused, " My work is naught
But human skill and human thought;
A little child's pure eye can see
Its failure from divinity;
Trusting too much the artist mood,
I've lost the sense of brotherhood;
I've looked within, I have not been
A fellow-man with fellow-men.
Christ loved mankind; He did not shun
The sinner nor the publican."
The chisel dropped from his nerveless hand,
He wandered homeless through the land.
His heart went out to men's distress;
He ate the bread of loneliness,
He helped the outcast and the poor,
He cheered the convict's dying hour;
In sorrow, sickness, pain and strife
He learned the bitterness of life.

Once more he felt the fierce unrest,
Thrilled with ideals unexpressed,
And sought again his workshop's door:
The unused tools lay on the floor,
The sunbeams fell on cast and bust,
The work-bench white with marble dust,
The tools he left with downcast heart
Feeling the failure of his art.

The Sculptor

He wrought with fasting and with prayer,
With trance and vision on the air,
He saw the loving, pitying eyes,
The brow o'ercast with sacrifice.
The Christ of sorrow, the Christ of pain,
He yearned to form that men might see
The eternal strength of sympathy.
He wrought in feverish haste, as one
Who knows that he must soon be gone,
But not until his work be done.

Again his labor was complete,
He called the child from out the street.
" Dear child," he said, " now tell me true,
Who does this statue seem to you ? "
The child looked up, " Oh, this is He
Who said, ' Let children come to me,'
This is the Lord who loved men so,
And died for us long years ago."

" I thank Thee, Lord," the master cried,
" That this pure child has testifed,
I've learned through human sympathy
Some faint conception, Lord, of Thee,
Oh, may it be within Thy grace
I soon may see Thee, face to face ! "
The master's head dropped on his breast,
His " long disquiet merged in rest."
That night he died ; around his bed
The awed attendants, whispering, said,
" The pale, thin face is like the one
That he last wrought in flawless stone."

"'TIS FOLLY TO BE WISE"

TO-DAY I saw two men upon the street
Who seemed to prove it true that extremes meet:
One had a smug air of prosperity,
"Pride in his port, defiance in his eye,"
Well fed, well dressed, a form of ample girth,
A rotund face contented with the earth;
Much grist had come unto his busy mill
And he had levied toll with right good will.
Behind him close an unkempt creature came,
A shambling form weighed down with fear and shame,
But keeping even pace, though glancing back
As one who hears the hounds upon his track,
And knows the hour has come when he must stand
At bay with failing heart and feeble hand.

And while I wondered if the tramp could be
Some claimant on the other's charity,
A low voice spoke, "These two forms are the same —
One is the man the other is his fame."
Eager, I cried, "Teach me that I may know
Which is the real man, and which the show,
So that hereafter I may well discern
The hypocrite and criminal, and learn
To look behind the fair appearances
And see the masked soul as it really is."

But the voice answered softly, "Nay, not so;
For then no friends nor comrades could you know."

LOVE'S LIGHT

FROM the enchanted land
Love brings a torch in hand,
Not that which lights the fires,
Which burn the heart with fierce desires
To arid sand,

But the white flame which brings
To light long-hidden things :
Deep slumbering energies,
Ancestral traits and memories,
From distant springs.

He enters the dark halls
Of thought ; upon whose walls
Are cut the ancient runes,
That run to old, prophetic tunes,
Which he recalls.

For love's light can reveal
Man's inner self, unseal
The aspiring fount of hope,
And give the darkened spirit scope
To live and feel.

LOVE'S SERVICE

LOVE called to a young man winningly,
"Come join the ranks of my company,
And take the field in my service."

But the young man said, "There are other things
Than blushes and kisses and flowers and rings,
Of far more worth than your service.

There's a fortune to make and work to be done,
The world to be conquered, and fame to be won,
Which they lose who enter Love's service.

There's business and sport and pleasure and art;
Your warfare is folly, your weapon a dart;
I've no time to waste in your service."

Love turned lightly away when he heard the rebuff,
For young volunteers were more than enough
To fill up the roll of his service.

But time going past made clear to the man
That they are the wisest who join when they can
The worshipful ranks of Love's service.

Love's Service

So the man brought to Love his jewels and coin ;
Forgetting his years he thought he would join
The throng who pressed to Love's service.

But Love answered lightly, "The day has gone by;
A sear autumn leaf's too thin and too dry
For a garland worn in my service.

You can buy if you like a friendly regard,
And perhaps it may seem, if you try very hard,
As if you were in my service.

But the raw recruits for my household guard
I take from the young, the old are debarred
From taking the oath in my service.

The countersign's—Youth—"Can you give it?" "Ah, no,"
"Then, right about face. You're too old and too slow
To learn the details of my service."

THE SHAKESPEREAN PHRASE

HE took ten words from our English speech:
Two were such as mothers teach
Their children when they croon them rhymes
Or teach them legends of old times,
One he learned from his father's men,
One he picked up from "rare old Ben,"
Two he heard Marlowe use one day
At the Mitre Tavern after the play,
One he recalled from a ballad rude
That his comrades sang in Lucy's Wood,
Two he had heard on London street—
A verb and a noun now obsolete
But full of pith in Elizabeth's reign—
And one he found in old Montaigne.

He set the Saxon words beside
The high-born Latin words of pride,
And lo! the ten words joined together
To make a phrase which lives forever.
An immortal phrase of beauty and wit,
A luminous thought the soul of it,
But with no baffling wordy fence
Between the reader and the sense.

The Shakespearean Phrase

Genius finds in our every-day words
The music of the woodland birds,
Discloses hidden beauty furled
In the common-place stuff of the every-day world.
And for her highest vision looks
To the world of men, not the world of books.

REQUIESCAT

N. M.— Obit A. D. 18—. Aetat 25

AS one born out of his due time
Oh friend, you came to this dull age,
Missing your lawful heritage
Of music, beauty, color, rhyme.

To bleak New England's barren shore
You came, an artist out of place,
Where niggard nature grants but space,
Too poor and cold to grant us more.

You needed background for your thought,
And warmth, and depth, and joy in life,
But in our sordid social strife
You missed the vital breath you sought.

Your richly-dowered human heart
Starved on our juiceless mental food,
And wandered in blank solitude,
And lived its inner life apart.

Homesick of soul, your nature pined
For sunny Florence, or for Rome,
And sought, but found no native home
Among your kin but not your kind.

Requiescat

The brilliant cousin of our blood,
The Puritan, whose steel-blue eyes
Looked into yours with vague surmise,
Loved you, but never understood.

And so her love was but a pain,
And only added to your need;
Or, was that love which could not read
A nature on a different plane?

For love could look behind the screen
And penetrate with subtle sense,
The fine-wove veil of reticence
Which screened you from your fellow-men.

I cannot grieve that you are gone,
O, precious soul and kindly heart,
Believing you are less apart
Than when on earth, and less alone.

THE WARP AND WOOF

FOR us, by unseen hands the web of life
Is wove,
And unseen fingers swiftly move along
The loom,
And ply the shuttle, freighted with a weft
Of love;
A golden thread shot through the warp
Of doom—
A fine wire gleaming bright among
The threads,
Which makes a fabric of what else
Were shreds.

When time destroys that web, he saves and stores
The gold,
For it is precious metal, never worn
Nor old.

PART III.

SONNETS

THE OUTER SEA

AS sailors in some narrow land-locked sea,
Find open water but a space before
Their prow, and then the hills on either shore
Shut off the reaches that beyond may be,
So men look out on life. The way is free
How far we cannot tell; a little store
Of time lies open to us—then—no more—
The walls of life close on mortality.

But as the sailor near the embracing hills
Can feel the ground swell from some sea beyond
Whose rhythmic heaving all the channel fills
With slow pulsations from the vast profound
And finds a passage through, so death may be
For us, a gate into eternity.

ACT AND DEED

THE Roman Stoic said, "I've lost a day
If it has passed unmarked by some good deed,
Some brother helped in hour of direst need,
Or cheered by kindly word on rugged way;
For days are but as blanks, on which men may
Engrave a record for the gods to read,
By action only, since gods never heed
The will that central in the action lay."

What shall they say whose power to act is lost,
Poor, pallid ghosts of men, whose utmost cost
Is spent in doubt and endless, vain surmise—
Prostrate before a deed in weak surprise?
They lose all time, and are but dead machines
Whose action marks no day, and nothing means.

ICELAND

O RUGGED land with hidden heart of fire,
Girt by the northern sea, home of that race
To which thy rocks were pleasant as the place
Of feasting is to lesser men, higher
And higher, while Heckla lights thy funeral pyre,
The shroud is drawn by inches o'er thy face,
The ice sheet slowly crawls with chill embrace
And homes and fields are whelmed in ruin dire!

Oh, what a living death! Happier far
To burn in clash of some onrushing star,
To know glad life in one mad moment lost,
Than this dull close of chilling eld and frost!
But thus they say the world will meet her doom,
Creeping, half conscious, to an icy tomb.

MODERN THOUGHT

OUR souls are overweighed; we have bought
A barren lore and know no one thing well.
The central secrets of the earth and hell,
The key of heaven, divinity inwrought
In nature's heart, the hidden hold long sought
By poet-priest in mediæval cell,
Are darker than before; we cannot tell
The truths that Kempis felt and Dante taught.

A dusty heap of facts and theories,
Like sand which clogs men's march on desert plain,
Weighs down our thoughts, blurs sacred mysteries:
'Twere wiser far to raise from earth our eyes
And view the distant mirage once again
Although books say, "mere vision of sick brain."

THE SKY

THIS overarching, stainless, starry dome,
Which everywhere I go encloses me,
This azure veil which screens infinity,
Behind which I once thought God had his home,
Through modern keen analysis has come
To be divested of divinity;
For science proves it only "seems to be,"
And is but "bluish rays" from air-born foam.

'Tis only "foggy particles" that hang before
The empty void; 'tis mere illusion when
We think we see the sky; soon all the bars
Of sense that cheat the intellect of men
Shall be removed. O Science, we implore,
Arrest your march, do not dethrone the stars!

SCIENCE

SAY not that science is irreverent,
And hurls the true gods from their ancient seat.
Truth is her goal. Her set face is intent
With single thought towards nature's last retreat.

Her key unlocks the secrets of old world,
She reads the law the deep of time concealed,
Shows in the seed the coming plant upfurled,
Sees in the past the plan of God revealed.

No heart can now recall the antique mood
Of fervid faith and frenzied ecstasy,
When the free spirit of the race was cowed
Before a priest-created deity.

The torch of science casts a ray beyond,
Where all truth centers in the dim profound.

THE NEW FAITH

WHEN I believed that, "God lived in the sky,"
And I was told, "the world was his and they
That dwelt therein," God seemed not far away;
But now He is withdrawn. Heart-sick, men try
To read the rocks and stars, which certify,
"There is no God but Force and Law." No ray
Of love streams from the firmament; no day
To come breaks brighter than the day gone by.

Is then Thy presence chamber far from men,
O God, in fathomless eternity,
Beyond the scope of thought? Then more and more
We turn unto Thy son, the Christ, who bore
Our human griefs, and walked within our ken;
A MAN, in Nazareth of Galilee.

TWO TYPES

ONE journeys pensive through the deepening gloom,
That darkens over all the rugged road
On which the helpless race of man has trod
In slow procession to an antique tomb
On which the drooping opiate poppies bloom,
And says that poison snakes and horned toad
Are truest emblems of the normal mode
Of life in Nature's all-creative womb.

Another treads life's highway cheerily—
Finds violets by summer breezes kissed,
And simple wayside flowers fair to see:
Pleased with these little things he never cares
That hope is left behind with every mile he fares;
Near-sighted, hopeful, shallow optimist!

MAN PROPOSETH

I HAD a friend, and planned with him to lead
A life withdrawn from strife and toil and care—
To stray together through the byways where
The quiet joys are found—where worldly greed
Should never chill, and trade's accursed breed
Should never taint the wild and wholesome air
Blown from the distant hills; and fortune's snare
Should not be spread for feet from fortune freed.

A blight is on those hills for he is gone;
They seem but mounds heaped up on dead men's bones—
The moss-grown boulders, ranked funereal stones;
The shady by-path leads me to his grave.
Better within some city live a slave
Than here, though free, but friendless and alone.

MORITURUS

MY children's shouts float in the open door,
Blent with the chirping cricket's merry din,
Fresh, joyous cries, whose music is akin
To nature's sounds. Ah, what has life in store
For them? Far off I hear a sullen roar,
The soulless city's ceaseless cry, wherein
Is raised the dull refrain of grief and sin,
Sad minor chords, recurrent evermore.

But I must leave them soon. O Time, refrain!
Thou bring'st cold death, who, hid among thy train,
Is pacing nearer, keeping step with thee:
I see his calm grey eye; I pray in vain:
He lifts his hand and beckons unto me.
O God, my Father, Thou their Father be!

EVOLUTION

THE sun had set, and in the mellow light
Suffusing all the west—the afterglow—
One star was faintly shining, hanging low
On the horizon's edge; advancing night
Drew shadows through the air and o'er the height;
Then in the east a ruddy fire! and lo,
New light: the full-faced moon was climbing slow
The sullen sky; the star, one moment bright,
Sank trembling down the void.

Can this thing be,
That from our sombre life, as silently
One life fades out, swung down by cosmic law,
Which lifts another up? Do all things draw
Sequent to nature's movement? and are we
But parcel of the earth, like rock or tree?

HISTORY AND POETRY

THREE men seem real as living men we know:
The Florentine, whose face, care-worn and dark,
Rossetti drew; the Norman duke, "so stark
Of arm that none but him might bend his bow;"
And "gentle Shakespeare," though enshrouded so
In his own thought, that some men cannot mark
The soul his book reveals, as when a lark
Sings from a cloud, unseen by all below.

But still more real than these seem other three
Who never walked on earth: "Hamlet the Dane,"
The "noble Moor," the cruel Scottish thane—
Ambition's thrall. How strange that they should be,
Though naught but figments of the poet's brain,
Instinct with life, and yet more real than he!

SIR WALTER

THE Critic says Romance is dead, and we
Must cease to read her tales of ancient war,
That only children love fair fancy's lore,
For "fiction must reflect reality."
But art is other than anatomy:
Romance is true as science is—nay, more;
Its fair mirage portrays a haunted shore,
Outside the field of "pen photography."

Therefore, I send this hail, O Scott, to thee
And to the sturdy children of thy pen,
Peasant and peer, true women and brave men—
Bold Quentin Durward and sweet Isabel,
Meg Merrilies and old Mortality,
Di Vernon and the Knight of Avenel.

TWO POETS

THE austere outlines of an ancient creed
He sicklied o'er with modern sentiment,
And scratched his name on Buddha's monument
In dainty characters, that all might read,
As men paint signs on mountain sides; then freed
From shame, the Master's seamless garment rent,
And patched with cheapest thread, to market sent;
For this he wins the dilettante's meed.

Not so, O Milton, to thy lonely heart
The poet's task appealed; for letters then
Were not a trade; serene, you dwelt apart
No platform singer with commercial art,
And strove to justify God's ways to men,
Scorning the methods which control the mart.

THE GLOBE THEATRE

A WOODEN shed hard by the river's side,
Close pressed by squalid homes of all things base
And cheap amusements of the populace,
And thronged with common men, a motley tide
Of gross humanity, shunned and decried
By priest and puritan—this was the place
Where men met gentle Shakespeare face to face;
And where Art bloomed, disdained by vulgar pride.

So have I seen some lovely flower to spring
Among vile weeds, neglected and apart,
And catch ethereal grace from air and sky,
Beyond the reach of "slow-endeavoring art"
Yet grow, by its own law, a perfect thing,
Through careless nature's potent alchemy.

THE OLD AND THE NEW SELF

BACK through the years I look, but cannot see
My Self ; a stranger filled my place and bore
My face and name. I stand tranced on the shore
Of love's new world, a new self—loving thee.
From this new self, love-crowned, I cannot free
My older self ; so much love's dower 's more
Than that which it endows ; its boundless store
Holds no account with hope or memory.

Therefore, the self with which I love you now
Creates a past, wherein strange figures move—
My old self and old thoughts, which to and fro
Flit aimlessly. This new self, by your love
Evoked, looks on, as on some vacant show ;
So unreal seems that self of long ago.

LOVE AND MEMORY

"TOO few," you say, "the days for love to grow
Since face to face we met, for all sweet flowers
Come slowly to the light, and this of ours
Is but of yesterday!" Ah, say not so:
All kindly thoughts and all we come to know
Of loyalty and faith, unfolds our powers
For gentle love. He reckons not the hours
But builds on memories.

Long years ago
When my young heart thrilled at some poet's song,
'Twas you, I reverenced in the heroine;
'Twas then, though far apart, we grew akin,
Does not the soul of Shakespeare's Imogen,
That pure and queenly soul, severe and strong,
Through your clear eyes look on the world again?

"WAS I CONTENT BEFORE?"

"BEFORE I loved thee, dear, 'Was I content?'"
Sweetheart, I cannot tell. The man who wakes
And sees the crimson streak where morning breaks
When the grey curtain of the night is rent,
Cannot recall the dreams that darkness sent.
For him the distant hill beyond the lakes,
From all the throbbing light new beauty takes,
And dreams seem night's dismantled wonderment.

Nor can I tear out from my soul's embrace
The gentle image by your love evoked,
And recreate that vague, unpeopled space
Within my mind where blind conjecture groped
And phantom dreams. No memory can displace
The substance with the shadow of things hoped.

PART IV.

HUMOROUS VERSE

SONNETS TO SATAN

No. 1

GRAND Devil of old days, where hast thou fled?
In what oblivious limbo dost thou lie,
Inactive with thy great fraternity
Of fiends, whilst earth remains unvisited?
On what food has our noble Satan fed
That he should lose his ancient energy,
And like some outworn heathen deity,
Should hide with Jove and Mars his discrowned head?

What would John Milton say if he were told
That age had made thy ardent spirit cold?
Or Doctor Martin Luther, if he knew
You'd ceased to call in person on the blest
To tempt or scare? Why they would say that you
Now found the world so bad, you liked hell best.

No. 2

YOU were such picturesque, concrete material
For painter's pencil or for poet's pen,
And so unique. Take you for all in all,
We shall not look upon your like again.

You had a quaint and quiet humor, too,
A mediæval flavor hung about your deeds
That gave a merry tale concerning you,
An interest which our modern novel needs.

Besides, it must have been a pleasant thing
To load upon a scapegoat all one's shame,
And make one's conscience cease disquieting
By simply saying, "devil take the blame."

Fiend of our fathers, would it not be well
To spend more time on earth, and less in hell?

Sonnets to Satan

No. 3

ONCE Burns could speak of you as "Nickie Ben,"
In a familiar, off-hand sort of way,
And tell how on the night of Halloween
Stout Tam o' Shanter saw you at your play.

On Hawthorne's page, a humorous half-belief
In midnight revels 'neath the forest trees
Where witches danced around you, gave relief
To tales of spiritual tragedies.

Great Goethe used you in a weakened form,
As Mephistopheles, but even then,
That grand Walpurgis night amid the storm
Is his most powerful, poetic scene.

Our dear, departed friend gave color, tone,
And zest to art, that's lost now he is gone.

No. 4

WHEN the first settlers came to Boston Bay
You were a "power to be felt and seen,"
Or smelt at least. Must you, too, pass away,
And only folk-lore keep your memory green?

For still in every town a "devil's hole"
Or "devil's rock" is sacred to your name,
And "devil's chair" or "devil's pit and bowl"
Bears testimony to your ancient fame.

We have the places yet, but weakly call
Them "Bellvues" or "Belmonts": our modern taste
For thin neo-romance disguises all
The infernal flavor of the good old past.

How much more strong the early-diabolic
Nomenclature than modern pseudo-classic!

No. 5

IT gave some interest to a thunder-storm
To feel it must be "your night out," to hear
In howling winds your voice, to glimpse your form
With minor fiends and demons "on a tear."

What is a tempest now? Throughout the West
An "area of low pressure" is foretold
In penny sheets; its course laid down, at best
An item of the news; not so of old

When you and all your crowd rode on the blast,
Whirling beneath its sulphurous canopy,
And yelled to laggard witches as it passed
To mount and join the dreadful revelry.

You gave a storm artistic emphasis,
The note of demon energy we miss.

No. 6

HOW many "pleasing shapes" you used to wear ;
Black poodle, wanton goat, elusive rat ;
Though your unerring taste made you appear
Most frequently in guise of household cat.

Your business suit of horns and cloven feet
And tail a trifle long, perhaps might be
To modern taste bizarre, but still was neat
And marked by individuality

And if, as fat old man you took the role
Of merchant, bargaining with some young fool
To sign a bond to render up his soul,
Your manners were those of the "fine old school."

You never were a bore, or snob, or cad ;
In all your shapes your form was never bad.

No. 7

WE miss you. Neither Pater-Noster read
Reversed, nor withered witch with pentagon
And potent spell can call you from the dead,
Or ransom you from dull oblivion.

And now Napoleon is talked of more than you,
Though he would never ask so great a name
Were he alive. Giving each fiend his due
Writes you far higher on the scroll of fame.

And some maintain that Borgia was your peer,
And for his sake they pervert history.
He was a devil of a lower sphere
And lacked the " universal quality."

Napoleon and Borgia combined,
Compared to you, lacked breadth and force of mind.

No. 8

SOME of the tales we read concerning you,
As, that Saint Dunstan pulled you by the nose,
The best historic critics judge not true,
But only instances of how tradition grows.

Those mythic fancies cling about each name
That rises from the level of the race,
Like Cæsar, Arthur, Roland, Charlemagne,
As ivy garlands hide what they embrace.

But take the settled facts of history,
Interpret all the myths in modern mood—
Your character comes out in dignity,
Like the eighth Henry's from the pen of Froude.

You need no whitewash: it were more absurd
To paint the lily or to blacken Richard third.

No. 9

I SAY it is a shame that one to whom
Our age owes all its life-philosophy,
Should lie forgotten in an unmarked tomb,
No statue sacred to his memory.

You should be sculptured by a master's hand,
With Baal and Mammon on the side of thee,
And lesser imps beneath, a grotesque band,
Like griffins in the old-time heraldry.

And then perhaps this thoughtless, careless age
Would do late justice to your services,
And own the source of its great heritage,
Still broadening down the centuries.

But I, at least, will dedicate this feeble verse
To thee, whose deeds an epic should rehearse.

ANSWER FROM SATAN

DEAR friend, where do you live? In what obscure
Remote, forgotten hamlet do you lead
Your sheltered life, that you should be so sure
In your absurd belief that I am dead?

I'm less in evidence than when I ran
The brimstone business for a by-gone age,
For modern methods suit the modern man;
Co-operation now is all the rage.

I'm in the hands of a great syndicate,
The stock is held in small lots everywheres:
Did I not see your name on a certificate?
All safe investors dabble in our shares.

Though dividends are sometimes passed by us,
They're paid in time by

Yours,

Diabolus

LEGEND OF A GOOD WOMAN

SHE "did her duty," late and soon,
'Twas present to her consciousness;
In happiness or in distress
With equal force it drove her on.

She "did her duty;" did it so
That friends and family all thought
Her duty was just what she ought
To feel 'twere kinder not to do.

Her conscience was a dreadful goad,
Dreadful the most to dearest friends,
She sought to reach the hardest ends,
And reach them by the hardest road.

She knew no rest from wearing cares,
For, if she found none of her own,
She bustled 'round about the town
And borrowed some to work on shares.

She was a "great executive,"
Though not so great as busy death,
And with her last expiring breath
She firmly said, "I mean to live."

So, at her funeral, each one
Looked at the rest with strange surmise,
All overcome with mild surprise
To find the world still running on.

And to another, one would say,
"'Twould go much smoother, seems to me,
If she would rise to oversee
And manage things in her old way."

"I cannot understand how one
With such a spirit, tempest-tossed,
Should rest, her energy all lost,
And acquiesce in all that's done."

And one would say, "All's for the best
We must not question Providence
That looks beyond our human sense
And knows when mortals need a rest.

"She played her part; she plays it still
With thorough conscientiousness,
Though quiet roles to us seem less
Accordant with her vigorous will.

"But on the Resurrection Morn,
She'll hustle round among the dead,
And any ghost who lies in bed
Will wish he never had been born.

" When the last trump sounds o'er the sea,
She'll jump, and say, ' Come, let me blow,
O Gabriel, and I will show
You how to sound the reveille ! ' "

So on her tomb they cut this deep,
" Life's fitful fever now is past,
She rests in peace, at last ! at last !
Tread softly, friend, and let her sleep."

THE FATE OF THE SPRING POET

THREE poets came sailing out of the west,
Out of the west and the dying day,
Each sang the song that he loved the best:
And one was "bearded and bold and young,
And one was fair as the songs he sung,
And one was old and hoary."

The first sang a song of knightly deeds—
Of knightly deeds in the "furious fray,"
Of "castles and tourneys" and "gallant steeds,"
Of thoughts and hopes of ages past,
And his song was like a trumpet blast
From the mystical source of glory.

And the second sang a ballad drear—
A ballad dread of a "lady gay"
Sweet as the blossoms of "yester year,"
With the free and careless charm which clings
To all those slight and simple things
From the fount of ancient story.

But the third sang a song about the Spring—
About the Spring, and the "verdant May,"
When "the grass grows green" and "the sweet birds sing."—
Two pistol shots rang on the startled air!
And the others arose and left him there
With his "Verses on Spring," "fresh and gory."

THE HONEST MAN AND THE PHRENOLOGIST

DR. SPURTZHEIM–GALL long had read
The character from the shape of the head.

He could tell by feeling a stranger's bumps
Just where his character lay in lumps.

A pale young man with a deep-set eye
Called to consult him professionally.

The doctor carefully felt his head,
Consulted his charts, and then he said:

"Music, six, and language, eight—
The higher virtues predominate.

Honesty, ten, causality, small,
Deceitfulness, almost nothing at all."

The young man opened his pocket-book;
A ten-dollar note with a sigh he took;

Remarked with a smile, that his friends all knew
That he was "honest, through and through."

The doctor returned to make his fee
Eight dollars change in good money.

The young man left with a satisfied face
Since his character had a solid base.

The Doctor, too, looked satisfied, till
The day he tried to deposit that bill.

For the teller said when he glanced at it,
"This ten-dollar bill is counterfeit."

MORAL

Science is science, but it cannot read
The thoughts inside an honest man's head.

THE MARRYIN' OF DANNY DEEVER

WITH APOLOGIES TO MR. RUDYARD KIPLING

"WHAT is the organ playing for?" asked the little maid.
"To make a noise, to make a noise," the dapper usher said.
"Why do you look so sad, so sad?" asked the little maid.
"I've got to see my best friend spliced," the dapper usher said.

For they're marryin' Danny Deever, you can hear the organ play,
He's given up his freedom, so they've fixed the church up gay,
They're playin' of the weddin' march; this is his weddin' day;
For they're marryin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What makes those front-pew folks look round?" asked the little maid.
"They want to see the victim quail," the dapper usher said.
"What makes 'em so excited?" asked the little maid.
"They like to see the noose drawn tight," the dapper usher said.

They're marryin' Danny Deever, he's marchin' up the aisle,
The procession is a-movin', slow-step in double file;
Danny's feelin' pretty wretched, he wears a frightened smile,
They're a-marryin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

The Marryin' of Danny Deever

"I knew him when a happy boy," said the little maid.
"His happy days are over," the dapper usher said.
"He used to play from morn to night," said the little maid.
"He won't get much more chance to play," the dapper usher said.

They're marryin' Danny Deever, he's a-marchin' to his fate,
He can't escape the women; they've struck a solemn gait,
Do what he could to shirk it, he had to fill his date,
They're marryin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"Why don't he break and run for life?" asked the little maid.
"They'd capture him in no time," the dapper usher said.
"Why don't he send a sick excuse?" asked the little maid.
"It wouldn't work in this place," the dapper usher said.

They're marryin' Danny Deever; he's whiter than a sheet.
They've closed on him in front and rear and cut of his retreat,
For fear he'd jump across the pews and rush into the street,
While they're marryin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What's that so white a-standing there?" asked the little maid.
"That is the executioner," the dapper usher said.
"What makes him look so serious?" asked the little maid.
"He's dreadin' what he's got to do," the dapper usher said.

They've married Danny Deever, you can hear the organ play,
They're coming down the aisle again, they're marchin' him away,
The minister is waitin'; he'll want his fee to-day.
After marryin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

A LETTER AND ANSWER

Question

DEAR B:—I've been hunting all creation
For the following quotation—
" Nothing in his life so noble
As his death was ; " if no trouble,
Will you write me who first said it ?
Somewhere I am sure I've read it,
But I cannot now be quite sure
When, or where, or why, or wherefore.
Is it Latin or Teutonic ?
Wordsworthian or Byronic ?
French or English or Italian ?
Johnsonese or Machiavellian ?
Or does Johann Wolfgang Goethe
Say it apropos of Werther ?

Yours, A.

Reply

DEAR A:—

Look at Macbeth 1, 4-8, where Malcolm says Cawdor
Died with urbanity, not caring a moidoire
For the civil-service-reforming committee,
Come to take off his head without any pity.

It's true Malcolm's words aren't precisely identical
With these that you quote, but it's clear that he meant
it all.
Now whether Shakespeare cribbed that from Tacitus,
Bearing such a resemblance as it does
To the latter's remarks on the Emperor Otho,
I cannot now say ; but I certainly know though,
That I shouldn't much blame the "Sweet Swan of Avon"
If he did crib good things from an old Roman haythen ;
For whatever he took he would always better it sure
By the force of his art into straight English literature.
Whenever in doubt as to whom to give credit,
It's sure to be safe to assume that he said it,
And whatever I find set down in his pages,
I say is his own, as the " heir of the ages."

Yours, B.

THE MODERN ROMANS

UNDER the slanting light of the yellow sun of October,
A "gang of Dagos" were working close by the side of the car track.
Pausing a moment to catch a note of their liquid Italian,
Faintly I heard an echo of Rome's imperial accents,
Broken-down forms of Latin words from the Senate and Forum
Now smoothed over by use to the musical *lingua Romana*.
Then came the thought, Why, these are the heirs of the conquering Romans;
These are the sons of the men who founded the Empire of Cæsar;
These are they whose fathers carried the conquering eagles
Over all Gaul and across the sea to *Ultima Thule*.
The race-type persists unchanged in their eyes, and profiles and figures—
Muscular short and thick-set, with prominent noses, recalling
"*Romanos rerum dominos, gentemque togatam.*"
See, Labienus is swinging a pick with rhythmical motion;
Yonder one pushing the shovel might be Julius Cæsar,
Lean, deep-eyed, broad-browed, and bald, a man of a thousand;
Further along stands the jolly Horatius Flaccus;
Grim and grave, with rings in his ears, see Cato the Censor;
And the next has precisely the bust of Cneius Pompeius.
Blurred and worn the surface, I grant, and the coin is but copper:

Look more closely, you'll catch a hint of the old superscription—
Perhaps the stem of a letter, perhaps a leaf of the laurel.

On the side of the street, in proud and gloomy seclusion,
"Bossing the job," stood a Celt, the race enslaved by the legions,
Sold in the market of Rome, to meet the expenses of Cæsar.
And as I loitered, the Celt cried, "'Tind to your worruk, ye Dagos,
Full up yer shovel, Paythro', ye haythen, I'll dock yees a quarther."
This he said to the one who resembled the great Imperator;
Meekly the dignified Roman kept on patiently digging.

Such are the changes and chances, the centuries bring to the nations.
Surely, the ups and downs of this world are past calculation.
How the races troop o'er the stage in endless procession!
Persian, and Arab, and Greek, and Hun, and Roman, and Vandal,
Master the world in turn and then disappear in the darkness,
Leaving a remnant as hewers of wood and drawers of water.
"Possibly,"—this I thought to myself—"the yoke of the Irish
May in turn be lifted from us in the tenth generation.
Now the Celt is on top, but time may bring his revenges;
Turning the Fenian down once more to be 'bossed by a Dago.'"

THE GRECO-TROJAN GAME

FIRST on the ground appeared the god-like Trojan Eleven,
Shining in purple and black, with tight and well-fitting sweaters,
Woven by Andromache in the well-ordered palace of Priam.
After them came, in goodly array, the players of Hellas,
Skilled in kicking and blocking and tackling and fooling the umpire.
All advanced on the field, marked off with white alabaster,
Level and square and true, at the ends two goal posts erected,
Richly adorned with silver and gold and carved at the corners,
Bearing a legend which read, "Don't talk back at the umpire"—
Rule first given by Zeus, for the guidance of voluble mortals.
All the rules of the game were deeply cut in the crossbars,
So that the players might know exactly how to evade them.

On one side of the field were ranged the Trojan spectators.
Yelling in composite language their ancient Phrygian war-cry;
"Ho-hay-toe, Tou-tais-tou, Ton-tain-to; Boomerah, Boomerah, Trojans!"
And on the other, the Greeks, fair-haired, and ready to halloo,
If occasion should offer and Zeus should grant them a touchdown,
Breck ek kek-kek-koax, Anax andron, Agamemnon!"

First they agreed on an umpire, the silver-tongued Nestor.
Long years ago he played end-rush on the Argive eleven;
He was admitted by all to be an excellent umpire
Save for the habit he had of making public addresses,
Tedius, long-winded and dull, and full of minute explanations,
How they used to play in the days when Cadmus was half-back,
Or how Hermes could dodge, and Ares and Phœbus could tackle;
Couched in rhythmical language but not one whit to the purpose.
On his white hairs they carefully placed the sacred tiara,
Worn by the foot ball umpires of old as a badge of their office,
Also to save their heads, in case the players should slug them.
Then they gave him a spear wherewith to enforce his decisions,
And to stick in the ground to mark the place to line up to.
He advanced to the thirty-yard line and began an oration:
"Listen, Trojans and Greeks! For thirty-five seasons,
"I played foot ball in Greece with Peleus for half-back and captain.
"Those were the days of old when men played the game as they'd orter.
"Once, I remember, Æacus, the god-like son of Poseidon,
"Kicked the ball from a drop, clean over the city of Argos.
"That was the game when Peleus, our captain, lost all his front teeth;
"Little we cared for teeth or eyes when once we were warmed up.
"Why, I remember that Æacus ran so that no one could see him,

"There was just a long hole in the air and a man at the end on 't.
"Hercules umpired that game, and I noticed there wasn't much back-talk."

Him interrupting, sternly addressed the King Agamemnon:
"Cease, old man; come off your antediluvian boasting;
"Doubtless our grandpas could all play the game as well as they knew how.
"They are all dead, and have long lined up in the fields of Elysium;
"If they were here we would wipe up the ground with the rusty old duffers.
"You call the game, and keep your eye fixed on the helmeted Hector.
"He'll play off-side all the while, if he thinks the umpire don't see him!"
Then the old man threw the lots, but sore was his heart in his bosom.
"Troy has the kick-off," he said, "the ball is yours, noble Hector."
Then he gave him the ball, a prolate spheroid of leather,
Much like the world in its shape, if the world were lengthened, not flattened,
Covered with well-sewed leather, the well-seasoned hide of a bison,
Killed by Lakon, the hunter, 'ere bisons were exterminated.
On it was painted a battle, a market, a piece of the ocean,
Horses and cows and nymphs and things too many to mention.

Then the heroes peeled off their sweaters and put on their nose-guards,
Also the fiendish expressions the great occasion demanded.
Ajax stood on the right; in the center the great Agamemnon;
Diomed crouched on the left, the god-like rusher and tackler,
Crouched as a panther crouches, if sculptors do justice to panthers.
Crafty Ulysses played back, for none of the Trojans could pass him,
All the best Greeks were in line, but Podas Okus Achilleus,
Who though an excellent kicker stayed all day in his section.

Hector dribbled the ball, then seized it and putting his head down,
And, as a lion carries a lamb and jumps over fences—
Dodging this way and that the shepherds who wish to remonstrate—
So did the son of Priam carry the ball through the rush line,
Till he was tackled fair by the full-back, the crafty Ulysses.
Even then he carried the ball and the son of Laertes
Full five yards till they fell to the ground with a deep indentation
Where one might hide three men so that no man could see them—
Men of the present day, degenerate sons of the heroes—

Now, when Pallas Athene discovered the Greeks would be beaten,
She slid down from the steep of Olympus upon a toboggan.

Sudden she came before crafty Ulysses in guise like a maiden ;
Not that she thought to fool him, but since Olympian fashion
Made the form of a woman good form for a goddess' assumption.
She then spoke to him quickly, and said, " O son of Laertes,
Seize thou the ball ; I will pass it to thee and trip up the Trojan."
Her replying, slowly re-worded the son of Laertes—
" That will I do, O goddess divine, for he can outrun me."
Then when the ball was in play, she cast thick darkness around it.
Also around Ulysses she poured invisible darkness.
Under this cover, taking the ball he passed down the middle,
Silent and swift, unseen, unnoticed, unblocked, and untackled.
Meanwhile she piled the Greeks and the Trojans in conglomeration,
Much like a tangle of pine-trees where lightning has frequently fallen,
Or like a basket of lobsters and crabs which the provident housewife
Dumps on the kitchen floor and vainly endeavors to count them,
So seemed the legs and the arms and the heads of the twenty-one players.
Sudden a shout arose, for under the cross-bar, Ulysses,
Visible, sat on the ball, quietly making a touch-down ;
On the tip of his nose were his thumb and fingers extended,
Curved and vibrating slow in the sign of the blameless Egyptians.
Violent language came to the lips of the helmeted Hector,
Under his breath he murmured a few familiar quotations,
Scraps of Phrygian folk-lore about the kingdom of Hades ;

Then he called loud as a trumpet, "I claim foul, Mr. Umpire!"
"Touch-down for Greece," said Nestor, "'twixt you and me
and the goal-post
"I lost sight of the ball in a very singular manner."

Then they carried the sphere back to the twenty-five yard line,
Prone on the ground lay a Greek, the leather was poised in his
fingers—
Thrice Agamemnon adjusted the sphere with deliberation;
Then he drew back as a ram draws back for deadly encounter.
Then he tripped lightly ahead, and brought his sandal in contact
Right at the point; straight flew the ball right over the cross-
bar,
While like the cries of pygmies and cranes the race-yell
resounded:
"Breck-ek kek-kek-koax, Anax andron, Agamemnon!"

THE ORIGIN OF CREDIT

IN the early days of the human race
When "the chase" as yet was really the chase,
Before the bow had been invented,
And men were forced to be contented
With a club or spear chipped out of stone
To kill the game when they had run it down;
Nimrod came to the wayside cavern
Where Methuselah kept his tavern
'Neath the same old sign "since the memory of man;"
That phrase then meant a longer span
Than now, for two hundred and ten
Was the voting age for primitive men,
And the older ones remembered with ease
The events of seven centuries.

Nimrod was cold and hungry and mad,
As he well might be with the luck he had had,
He had followed the track of a great cave-bear
For miles and miles and found the lair,
But the animal gone he knew not where.
He had thrown in vain his very best spear
Into the neck of a dinothere,
For the brute turned round and hunted him
Into the Tigris, and made him swim
To the other bank, when a sabre-toothed tiger

The Origin of Credit

Showed a great desire to put him inside her,
And he had to climb a cretaceous palm
To save himself from bodily harm.

Tired and hungry he sat him down
At one of the tables of rough-hewn stone;
From the inner cave was wafted up
The ordor of megatherium soup;
A waiter approached with deep genu-
Flexions and brought him the menu,
A pile of bricks with pictures rude
With every kind of diluvian food.

Nimrod ordered moa on toast
And a couple of quarters of dinothere roast.
These soon disappeared, for primitive man
Was built on a grand commodious plan;
His appetite was made to gauge
The monstrous fauna of the age.

Then the waiter brought him a piece of stone
With cuneiform characters scratched thereon.
This was the bill and meant that he
Must hand over some of the iron money
Which Tubal Cain forged for all Chaldee.
Trust was unknown so long B. C.,
And in those days men always paid
For what they ate, in cash or trade.

The Origin of Credit

Nimrod felt in his purse of skin
But not a coin he found therein;
For a moment he knew not what to do
In an emergency utterly new—
His bosom heaved, his eye grew dim,
A great conception rose in him,
A financial germ stirred in his breast;
At first it could not be expressed,
Then with an effort, thus spoke he,
"Charge it —— you, charge it to me."

In those six words there lay upfurled
The destiny of the business world;
The guests all felt their potency,
And vaguely murmured, "Charge it to me,"
Though no one knew what the meaning might be.
In the cavern's depths the pallid cooks
Re-echoed them with questioning looks,
While the scullions whispered fearfully
"Nimrod said, '—— you, charge it to me.'"

The waiter retreated unto the host
And said, "Charge Nimrod with moa on toast."
His voice was hollow, his face forlorn,
For the great idea of CREDIT was born,
And thus our poor humanity
Is wrenched with fearful agony
When a new and epoch-making thought
Into the world of men is brought.

The Origin of Credit

The old man shuddered and then sat still
Trying to think how to enter a bill;
At seven hundred one can't seize
With readiness on new idees,
All night he thought, and the next day
He said, "I cannot change my way.
'Tis now six hundred years, forsooth,
Since I first cut my wisdom tooth.
Shut up the shop, I will go west
And camp out where it suits me best."

In this the old man did "attain
To something of prophetic strain."
And when he died, in his assets
They found no schedule of bad debts;
And, since his day, experience
Has proved that he possessed horse-sense.

Bradstreet's reports prove that our age
Could learn much from the ancient sage.

ON A CHRISTMAS BOX OF "HENRY CLAYS"

WHEN the dove flew back to the water-logged ark and
brought in her beak the bud,
The one green thing that proved there was life 'neath the waste
of the mundane mud,
Young Japheth jeered, and black Ham sneered, but Shem said
never a word,
For none of the three had the least idee of the worth of the
gift of the bird.

But Noah stripped off the fresh, green leaves and dried them
on the stove—
Though a sailor rough, he was up to snuff, this prudent diluvian
cove—
Then he rolled them tight and got a light from the flame of the
binnacle lamp,
"Get under my lee, you boys," said he, "a cigar smokes best
when it's damp."

"I don't much car'," said this ancient tar, "how long this
v'yage is,
So be it I shan't be out of this plant, in which lies hope and
bliss.
Head the old boat so'th-east by so'th, that bird was pinted no'th
If we anchor at all we'll make a land fall where tobacco's a
natural growth."

On a Christmas Box of "Henry Clays"

Then the boys agreed that the fragrant weed, which the bird
had brought from the shore,
Was the very best thing any bird could bring, to prove it
would rain no more;
For peace and good-will now seemed to fill their father's
rugged breast;
"Foh suah," said Ham, "tobacco am the herb of peace and
rest."

And since that time, in every clime, the smoke of this plant
has been
A solace sweet, hard times' defeat, for all life-faring men;
But never less ill does it fill the bill than on a Christmas day,
When one's Christmas box is a box of cigars and the brand is
"Henry Clay."

THE PERFECT HORSE

THROUGHOUT the realm of Haroun-al-Rasched,
For equine grace no horse was like the steed
Of Mufti Bey. His action, style and speed,
His silky hide, short back, round hoofs, clean head,
Bright eye, small ears, proclaimed him thoroughbred—
In short, the perfect type, all men agreed,
Unmatched for color, symmetry and breed.
This horse had but one fault—he was quite dead.

This "modern verse," which flows so fluently,
Reminds one of that "perfect horse." The whole
Has color, form, "technique," the artist's goal
In "Cosmopolitan" or "Century,"
But somehow seems to lack the living soul
Without which verse is but the corpse of poetry.

SONNET IN THE "OBSCURE STYLE"

NOW could I take a volume from the row
And hurl it in the face of Destiny,
Retreating backward from the fair to-be
Within a virgin mask of polar snow,
Where all we hope to learn or come to know
Is but the echo of a by-gone fantasy
Whereon rise glimpses of some Arctic Sea,
Untossed, uncrumpled by no tidal flow.

"What do I mean?" dear Philistine, you ask!
To have a meaning is no poet's task:
Just let that octave nestle in your soul
If it can comprehend a cryptic whole.
I furnish rhymes and fancy words, all pat,
As for the sense, of course, you furnish that!

TO THE EARTH IN JANUARY

SEE here, O Earth; just mend your pace,
Hump yourself for a month or so,
'Till you pass this cold and frosty place,
This dreary region of ice and snow.

There's a part of your orbit, O Earth, you know,
Where past the Ram and the Bull you climb;
Now, that's a place you might go slow,
If you got ahead of your schedule time.

This steady progress, day by day,
Has a note of sameness; you really must
Show a burst of speed 'till you get to May;
You've got it in you to "up and dust."

You do things in mysterious ways,
In many regards you're wiser than we,
But I really think you could gain some days
If you'd throw off some of your gravity.

You're a wise old Earth, I will agree,
Your charges are, "all the traffic will bear,"
But regard for your passengers, seems to me,
Dictates more speed at this time of the year.

Let's hurry up and have 'em through,
These weary weeks of wintry dearth:
When the mercury rises to eighty-two,
Jog along as slow as you please, O Earth!

THE EMU'S PARTY

[FOR THE CHILDREN]

AN ancient maiden Emu
Had a breezy country villa,
With an extensive sea-view,
On the south coast of Australia.

This Emu's tastes were social,
And her heart was warm and kindly;
So she gave a children's party,
And sent her cards out blindly

To the Dodos and the Parrots
And the Vultures and the Sea-gulls,
And thoughtlessly included
Six little unfledged Eagles.

Then she called on Madam Duck-bill
At her home beside the water,
And proceeded with effusion
To invite her infant daughter.

"I will take care, my dear madam,
If you will be so good
As to trust us with your Susie,
That she eats the plainest food,

The Emu's Party

"Some simple vermin chowder
Or only ants on toast,
With smothered flies in honey,
And a tender larvae roast;

"Mashed angle-worms and spiders,
Or, if you think it best,
Grub soup with vermicelli,
Which is easy to digest.

"She shall be at home by bed-time,
At any hour you choose"—
Said Mrs. Duck-bill, solemnly,
"Have you asked the Kangaroos?"

"Why, no; the thought, dear madam,
Had not entered in my head:
I have but slight acquaintance with
That fore-shorten'd quadruped."

"Then I'm afraid, Miss Emu,
That Susie can not go:
Her grandpa was a mammal
Well connected as you know.

"She can never know wild Pigeons,
Nor those children of the Vulture,
Who seem to be deplorably
Incapable of culture."

"If that's the case, dear madam,
We'll close this interview.
My friends are birds, and so am I,"
Said the dignified Emu.

"I'm sure I know the Eagles,
And many others, who
Move in vastly higher circles
Than that purse-proud Kangaroo.

"Then the Parrots and the Pigeons
Have a regular family tree:
No animals are higher born, nor have
A better pedigree.

"There's my grand-uncle Ostrich
Can hold his head as high
As any wealthy mammal,
And—I wish you, ma'am, good-bye."

So little Susie Duck-bill
Was forced to play alone
By the artificial altitude
Of her mother's social tone.

She could see the Parrots swinging,
Hear the little Eagles squeal,
And thought "I wish we Duck-bills
Wern't so fearfully genteel.

But when next week the Kangaroos
Gave their hop and fancy ball,
This ambitious Madam Duck-bill
Received no cards at all.

"We can meet no oviparii,"
Said the leading Kangaroos,
"It's a cheap and retail method
Which the lower order use."

"The Duck-bills may be in the swim,
The creatures use four legs,
But we draw the social line at those
Whose grandmas laid fresh eggs."

"By the fore-legs of our fathers,
Badge of our noble birth;
By the pouch of the marsupials
That dates from elder earth;

"We must rigidly exclude
All novel combinations,
Admit within our circle
No nondescript creations."

MORAL:

This fable teaches all men,
And they may read who run,
That the socially exclusive
Miss heaps and heaps of fun.

TIME AND I

OLD TIME and I went into trade;
I put in my hopes and visions fair;
Old Time had nothing, but he said
He'd bring experience as his share.

And now we're closing the business up,
No treasure falls to my lot,
For Time has taken my youth and hope;
The "experience" I have got.

He wants to get some younger chaps
To carry his business on.
And hints, "I'd better retire, perhaps,"
Though I'm willing to let it run.

But I can't complain of him a mite,
He's allowed me to overdraw,
He's tended to business day and night
And "acted according to law."

I've wasted some chances he brought, 'tis true,
But he's never "gone back" on me,
For he always turns up something new,
"Let bygones be bygones," is his idee.

And when the dissolution's signed
And our partnership comes to an end,
I hope that he'll find it in his mind
To "give me a recommend."

DATE DUE

GAYLORD			PRINTED IN U S A

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 000 765 650 7